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# Factors Associated with and Notions Concerning Stress of the Administration and Academic Personnel

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***Abstract*** - Noticeably, stress has affected the performance of the university's manpower which result to sagging morale in the workplace. Thus this study evaluated the factors associated with and notions concerning stress of the administration and academic personnel of SLSU. A descriptive-survey method was employed to gather data from the 125 respondents using a Stress Audit instrument adopted from Miller and Smith (1993). The data gathered were consolidated and statistically analyzed using percentages and Pearson-r. On the whole, the administrative and academic personnel of SLSU had manifested serious susceptibility to stress sources and stress symptoms which were significantly affected by the academic personnel's age profile, and slightly affected by the length of service of both academic and administrative staff. The academic personnel's number of office designations had affected both their perspective on stress sources and symptoms. It can be deduced that the SLSU administrative and academic personnel's notions concerning stress sources and symptoms vary due to the nature and gravity of the tasks they perform. Therefore, it is recommended that a comprehensive "Welfare Administration Program" for the SLSU personnel be implemented to reduce health risks caused by stress and to promote the welfare and well-being of all SLSU employees.

***Keywords*** - Stress susceptibility, stress sources, stress symptoms, performance, academic staff, administrative personnel

## INTRODUCTION

Building a high performance organization is a popular topic in the training and development field (Lee, n.d.). In order to compete with the rest, companies require understanding as to what factors influence performance. Lee further stressed that one of the most significant factors is stress.

Stress affects the mind, body, and behavior in many ways. The specific signs and symptoms of stress vary widely from person to person. Some people primarily experience physical symptoms, such as low back pain, stomach problems and skin outbreaks. In others, the stress pattern centers on emotional symptoms, such as crying jags or hypersensitivity. Still for others, what predominate are the changes in the way they think or behave.

Lee (n.d.) stated that traditionally, stress has been viewed as an inevitable consequence of work life; or at most a health care issue. Caple quoted in Schultz and Schultz (n.d.) averred that everyone experiences stress on a daily basis, but a label of normalcy does not make it benign. It can lead to serious health problems, and it deserves attention. It is commonly accepted that an underlying stress issue causes over 60% of all visits to medical doctors. Seventy-two percent of American workers experiences frequent, stress-related physical or mental conditions that greatly increase health care costs. Forty percent of employee turnover is due to stress. Approximately, there are one million employees per day who are absent from work due to stress related disorders (Wolley as stated by Schultz and Schultz, n.d.).

Everyone faces different challenges and obstacles, and sometimes the pressure is hard to handle. When one feels overwhelmed or unsure how to meet the demands placed on him, he experiences stress. In small doses, stress can be a good thing. It can give you the push you need, motivating you to do your best and to stay focused and alert. Stress is what keeps an individual on his toes during a presentation at work. When the going gets tough, and when life's demands exceed one's ability to cope, stress becomes a threat to both his physical and

emotional well-being. Research shows that stress indeed, interferes with human intellectual, emotional, and interpersonal functioning, Lee (n.d.) added.

The potential causes of stress are numerous and highly individual. What one considers stressful depends on many factors, including one's personality, general outlook on life, problem-solving abilities, and social support system. Age, length of work service, and role overloads of personnel are also seen to affect how he or she addresses stress. Something that is stressful to a certain person may not faze others, or what is stressful for others maybe enjoyable for some.

The pressures and demands that cause stress are known as stressors. Everybody usually thinks of stressors as being negative, such as exhausting work schedule or a rocky relationship. However, anything that forces people to adjust can be a stressor. Regardless of whether an event is good or bad, if the adjustment it requires strains a person's coping skills and adaptive resources, the result is stress (Holmes-Rake, 2007).

In his seminal review, Cox (1993) noted that (1) there is evidence that the experience of stress at work is associated with changes in both behavior and physiological functions, which may both be harmful to employees' health; (2) only a minority of organizations were purposely practicing stress management in their workplace; (3) most stress management interventions were individually focused and (4) measurement of the current state of work-related stress and the effectiveness of an intervention require a standard or target to be meaningful.

In gaining an understanding of the complexities of stress several researches and concepts were examined. Gill et al (2007) averred that job stress can be prevented through two methods: (1) Though management programs and training for employees, and (2) organizational changes that improve working conditions. The first methods make use of Employees Assistance Programs (EAPs) which are designed to help workers with personal problems that may be adversely affecting their on-the-job performance. The confidential service includes counseling, mental health assessment and referrals, workshops on topics such as time management and relations, and legal and financial assistance. The second methods applied organizational changes that improve working

conditions. Institutional changes such as employees' participation from the bottom up implement policies that take employees' needs into account, and empower employees to do their best. Sharing information with employees to reduce uncertainty about their jobs and futures clearly define employee's roles and responsibilities; make communication friendly and efficient, not mean spirited or petty. Workers must be given opportunities to participate in decisions that affect their jobs. They have to be counseled on employees scheduling and work rules. Unrealistic deadlines must be avoided, and the organization should show that individual workers are valued. On the other hand, rewards and incentives must be accorded; employees must be praised verbally and institutionally for good work performance; and opportunities for career development must be provided and entrepreneurial work climate that gives employees more control over their work must be promoted.

The Yerkes-Dodson Laws as cited by Yerkes, et al. (1996) indicate that when learning situation is more complex, the optimal relationship between performance and stress gets stronger. Beyond an optional level, stress impairs performance. Janis and Man (1977) suggest that under stress, individuals may make decisions, based on incomplete information. This is supported by Friedman and Man (1993) who suggest that when under conditions of stress, individuals may fail to consider the full range of alternatives available, ignore long-term consequences, and make a decision based on over simplifying assumptions.

Stress can also contribute to performance decrements by slowing cognition and individual information processing. Idzikowski and Baddekey (1983) find that the time to complete a given task doubled with the introduction of an external stress. McLeod (1977) looks specifically at stress in the form of "task overload" asking an individual to perform more than one task under a time constraint and finds that the addition of multiple required tasks reduce the quality of individual performance and increase the magnitude of the performance decrement as compared with the case in which the individual has only one task to perform.

Rule VIII, Section 1 of the Rules and Regulations Implementing Book V of the Executive Order No. 292 otherwise known as Administrative

Code provides that every official and employee of the government is an asset or resource to be valued, developed and utilized in the delivery of basic services to the public. Hence, the development and retention of a highly competent and professional workforce in the public service shall be the main concern of every department or agency. Taking into account on programs on stress reduction or elimination definitely will promote this directive.

Social supports such as comfort, care, esteem or help from an organization is needed by people. Such support would include emotional support in the expression of empathy, caring and concern toward the person. Esteem support occurs through people's expression of positive regard for the person, encouragement or agreements with the individual's ideas or feelings and positive comparison of the person with others such as people who are less able or worse off. This kind of support serves to build the individuals feelings of self-worth, competence and of being valued. Tangible or instrumental support involves direct assistance. Informational support includes giving advice, suggestions or feedback while network support provides a feeling of membership in a group of people who share interests. (Cobb, 1976).

Southern Leyte State University, the only state university in Southern Leyte with its enormous role to provide excellence in education in the province is not spared from the agonizing effects of stress caused by a variety of sources. Noticeably, stress is taking its toll in the university manpower affecting grossly personnel performance resulting to sagging morale of the workforce. Although several researches on stress and performance in the workplace have already been done, no research to assess the factors associated with and notions concerning on stress between the administration and academic personnel has been conducted in SLSU, hence this research study.

## FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

This study is based on the theories of Robbins et al. (2005), Medina (2006), and Papalia (2004). It is also supported by Section 1, Rule VIII of the Omnubus Rules Implementing Book V of Executive Order # 292.

According to Robbins, an employee who is experiencing high stress

may become depressed, accident prone, or argumentative; may have difficulty making routine decisions; and may be easily distracted. The manager's concern is to reduce the stress that leads to dysfunctional work behavior, through controlling certain organizational factors to reduce organizational stress, and to a more limited extent, offering help for personal stress. This is supported by Dessler (2001) who averred that stress can lead to psychological problems. People who are under stress tend to perceive things less objectively than those who are not. Organization is a great potential source of stress for the employees, among the organizational factors that may confront the workers are interpersonal demands created by other employees, excessive rules and lack of participation in decisions, leadership styles that breed tensions, fear, and anxiety among employees.

When stress has become severe and work is affected the individual, it may adapt any of the following strategies: increased physical exercise, relaxation training and expanding the social support network. The organization may implement sound HRM practices like effective selection and training procedures, clearly write job descriptions to reduce worker anxiety regarding job responsibilities, effective reward system to relieve stress regarding pay expectations, increasing formal organizational communications with employees to reduce worker uncertainty by lessening role ambiguity and role conflict, increasing employee involvement in decision-making and redesigning jobs so employees can have more responsibility, more meaningful work, more autonomy, and increased feedback which result to reduced stress (Medina, 2006).

Papalia et al. (2004), laments that the more stressful the changes that take place in a persons life, the greater the likelihood of illness within next year or two. Some people react to stress by getting sick. The connection between stress and illness has long been observed, but only recently have we begun to understand more about how stress produces illness and why some people handle stress better than others. Intense or prolonged stress seems to weaken the immune system and increase susceptibility to illness. Occupational stress has become a worldwide epidemic. Workplaces are generally designed for efficiency and profit, not for workers well-being but human costs can hurt the bottom-line. When people feel they are in the wrong job or when efforts to meet job

demands are out of proportion to job satisfaction and other rewards, stress can result. Employees who feel overwhelmed, or who believed that their skills are not adequately recognized, or who do not have clear goals, tend to show high stress and low morale and productivity.

Section 1. Rule VIII of the Omnibus Rules Implementing Book V of Executive Order # 292 clearly underscored that every official and employees of the Philippine government is an asset or resource to be valued, developed and utilized in the delivery of basic services to the public. Hence the development and retention of a highly competent and professional workforce in the public service shall be the main concern of every department or agency. Each department or agency shall therefore establish a continuing program for career and personnel development for all agency personnel at all levels, and shall create an environment or work climate conducive to the development of personnel skills, talents, and values for better public service. Section 2 also provides that the career and personnel development plan shall include provisions on merit promotion, performance evaluation, in service training, overseas and local scholarships, and training grants, suggestions, incentive award systems, provisions for welfare, counseling, recreation and similar services, and other human resource development interventions.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This research study is aimed to determine the factors associated with and notions concerning stress between the administration and academic personnel of SLSU.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

**Research Method**. This study used the descriptive survey as a method of research. The research instruments were fielded to the academic and administrative staff of the five campuses of Southern Leyte State University.

**Research Environment**. This research work was conducted in the five campuses of Southern Leyte State University (SLSU) namely:

SLSU- Sogod, SLSU-Tomas Oppus, SLSU-Bontoc, SLSU-San Juan, and SLSU-Hinunangan. SLSU as an institution is greatly affected with the policies in rationalization and moratorium of creation of items wherein additional jobs are given to both academic and administrative staff without giving any additional monetary compensation; only de-loading scheme for the academic staff while nothing for the administrative personnel.

**Research Respondents**. The respondents of this study were the regular academic and administrative staff of the Southern Leyte State University. A stratified random sampling method was utilized in this particular research endeavor.

Table 1. The research respondents

| Campuses | Academic Staff | Administrative Staff | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| SLSU-Bontoc | 12 | 11 | 23 |
| SLSU-Hinunangan | 11 | 12 | 23 |
| SLSU-San Juan | 13 | 9 | 22 |
| SLSU-Sogod | 17 | 18 | 35 |
| SLSU-Tomas Oppus | 12 | 10 | 22 |
| **Total** | **65** | **60** | **125** |

**Research Instruments**. The study used an adopted tool on Stress Audit by Miller and Miller (1993).

**Data Gathering Procedures**. Permission to conduct this research study was sought from the University President through the Campus Administrators particularly for the administration of the research instrument to the academic and administrative staff of the five campuses of the university. The research questionnaires were personally administered to and retrieved from the respondents by the researchers. After which, consolidation and analysis of data were done followed by the interpretation of results and preparation of the technical report.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### The Research Population Distribution Per Campus

The respondents of this research study were both the academic and administrative staff of Southern Leyte State University (SLSU) particularly from its five campuses, namely: SLSU-Bontoc; SLSU-Hinunangan; SLSU-San Juan; SLSU-Sogod; and SLSU-Tomas Oppus. Out of the total population of the research study, 23 (18% are from SLSU-Bontoc, 23 (18%) from SLSU-Hinunangan, 22 (18%) from SLSU-San Juan, 22 (18%) from SLSU-Sogod, and 35 (28%) are from SLSU-Tomas Oppus. Figure 1 presents the distribution of research respondents per campus.

The population of this research study constitutes 32.13% of the total population of the University. Hence, forms a representative sample of the entire university employees. This would mean that the responses of the respondents truly stand for what is the general characteristics of the SLSU employees as regard their age, length of work experience, designation stress susceptibility, sources, and symptoms.

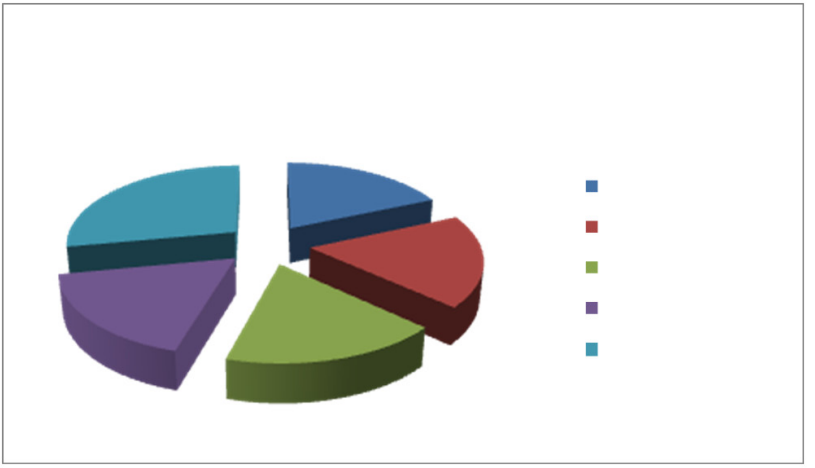

Figure 1. The research population distribution per campus

## The Demographic Profile of Research Respondents

Table 2 presents the research respondents' age profile which is classified into four categories. It can be gleaned that faculty respondents were more or less equally distributed among the four age groups; 16 (24.6%) are under the 21-31 years age group; 16 (24.6%) are in the 32-42 years age group; 16 (24.6%) are under the 43-53 years age group and 17 (26.2%) are in the 53-64 years age group. As for the administrative staff, 6 (10%) are under the 21-31 years age group; 19 (31.7%) are in the 32-42 years age group; 27 (45%) are in the 43-53 year age group and 8 (13.3%) are under the 53-64 years age group. On the whole, majority of the respondents' age range fall under the 43-53 age group with 43.4% followed by 28% who are in the 32-42 age group. This implies that the university is equally composed of more senior and younger faculty members who are with invaluable experiences and who energetic and enthusiastic, respectively. As stated in Babyboomercaretaker.com (2007), the morale and productivity of the employees in the workplace is greatly affected by age discrimination.

Table 2. SLSU employees' age profile

| Respondents | Age | | | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **21- 31 yrs** | **32 – 42 yrs** | 43 – 53 yrs | 53 – 64 yrs | |
| Academic Staff | 16 (24.6%) | 16 (24.6%) | **16 (24.6 %)** | 17 (26.2%) | 65 (100%) |
| Administrative Staff | 6 (10.0%) | 19 (31.7%) | **27 (45.0%)** | **8 (13.3%)** | **60 (100%)** |
| **Total** | **22 (17.6%)** | **35 (28.0%)** | **43 (34.4%)** | **25 (20.0%)** | **125 (100%)** |

Companies are most likely also to suffer in the long run because they overlooked the priceless experience of a senior employee. The contention is that a younger workforce may be perceived as energetic and enthusiastic, but they cannot replace years of experience. Nonetheless, a younger aspirant may sometimes be more authoritative and commanding than a senior employer. Hence, the selection, promotion or termination of an employee should be made on the basis of merit (Babyboomercaretaker.com, 2007). This would further mean

that age does not really matter when the argument is all about the performance and productivity in the workplace.

On the other hand, table 3 shows the SLSU employees' profile in terms of their length of work experience. It can be shown that the faculty members in the university with 0-8 years work experience ranked first with 32.3% while those with 26-34 years of work experience with 27.7% got the second rank; those with 9-17 years of experience got the third rank, which was closer to the second rank. On the one hand, most of the administrative staff belonged to the work experience range of 9-17 years with 43.3%, followed by those with 0-8 years of work experience with 21.7%, then with those belonging to the 26-34 work experience range of 26-34 years with 18.3%.

Table 3. SLSU employees' length of work experience profile

| Respondents | Length of Work Experience | | | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 0 yr – 8 yrs | 9 yrs - 17 yrs | 18 yrs - 25 yrs | 26 yrs - 34 yrs | |
| Academic Staff | 21 (32.3%) | 17 (26.2%) | 9 (13.8%) | 18 (27.7%) | 65 (100%) |
| Administrative Staff | 13 (21.7%) | 26 (43.3%) | 10 (16.7%) | 11 (18.3%) | 60 (100%) |
| **Total** | **34 (27.2%)** | **43 (34.4%)** | **19 (15.2%)** | **29 (23.2%)** | **125 (100%)** |

In totality, the data reveal that a majority of the university employees fall under the 9-17 work experience range with 34.4% followed by those who are in the 0-8 years work experience range with 27.2%. This means that in terms of the employees' work experience, most of them are already midway in the workplace. This further implies that the productivity of the university is on its way to the peak as it coincides with the majority of the employees' length of work experience.

Table 4 presents the designation profile of the university employees. The data confirm that among the faculty respondents, 31 or 47.7% have no designation; 29 or 44.6% has 1 or 2 designations; while 3 or 4.6% and 2 or 3.1% have 3 and 4 or more designations. Among the administrative staffs that were considered research respondents, 75% has no designation while those with 1 or 2 designations with 20%

ranked second. On the whole, majority of the university employees have no designation with 60.8% followed by those with 1 or 2 designations with 32.8%. This affirms that although the majority of the SLSU employees has no designation; however it is also evident that nearly half of the university employees are being designated with administrative functions in concurrence to their main duties and responsibilities as academic and administrative staff.

Despite the burgeoning population in the public schools, which include public higher education institutions, proposals to create faculty and administrative items are not approved since the moratorium of such is still in place; hence, the burden is given to the faculty and administrative staff that perform and deliver exceedingly well their respective primary functions including the assigned additional responsibilities. This observation, which is of primary concern to academic institutions, was experienced by the university itself and other SUCs. This is supported by Juanta (2003) when he revealed that department heads and principals in today's schools are multiskilled persons shaped by their various roles. They are seen as institutional leaders, motivators, counselors, dreamers, innovators, "firefighters" and crisis managers. These roles can become their worst enemies as these inflict harm to them as these would lead to emotional distress and physical health problems.

Table 4. SLSU employees' designation profile

| **Respondents** | **Number of Designation** | | | | **Total** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 0 | 1-2 | 3 | 4 and more | |
| Academic Staff | 31 (47.7%) | 29 (44.6%) | 3 (4.6%) | 2 (3.1%) | 65 (100.0%) |
| Administrative Staff | 45 (75.0%) | 12 (20.0%) | 1 (1.7%) | 2 (3.3%) | 60 (100.0) |
| **Total** | **76 (60.8%)** | **41 (32.8%)** | **4 (3.2%)** | **4 (3.2%)** | **125 (100.0%)** |

## The Stress Profile of the SLSU Employees

Stress is a natural part of life as what Juanta (2003) said. He stressed further that stress is a condition of the individual rather than

a condition of the external situation. Stress is an upshot from how we act in response to what transpires in our lives at work, at home, and at play. Miller and Smith (1993) further opined that people are quite different from one another in their susceptibility to stress. According to them, some are like horses, and some are like butterflies in terms of responding to stress. The horses tolerate great amounts of stress without faltering or breaking stride; the butterflies fall apart under the slightest demand or pressure. Whether one is a like a horse, or like a butterfly, that individual still depends on several ingredients: one's physical condition, the manner of taking care of oneself, and one's resources for coping with stress. Further, the author stressed that the tougher an individual is against stress, the more he or she can take it. A person who has a stress-prone constitution; is lazy about exercise, eats poorly, abuses stimulants, does not get enough sleep, or does not use any coping resources; does not stand much chance against stress.

Table 5 presents the SLSU employees' stress profile. It can be gleaned that the academic staff has a moderate susceptibility to stress with the highest frequency of 20 (30.8%). Eighteen or 27.7% of the Academic staff manifested susceptibility to stress which ranked second. On the one hand, the administrative staff has a high susceptibility to stress with the highest frequency of 23 (38.3%) followed by those with a moderate susceptibility to stress with a frequency of 19 (31.7%). However, as for the employees' view about stress sources, both the academic and administrative staff revealed serious range with frequencies of 47 (72.3%) and 40 (66.7%), respectively. Similar results were obtained on the academic and administrative staff's view on stress symptoms with frequencies of 41 (63.1%) and 34 (56.7%),respectively.

Table 5. SLSU employees' stress profile

| **Variables** | **SLSU Staff** | **Stress Profile** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | **MI** | **MO** | **HI** | **SER** |
| Stress Susceptibility | Acad | 12 (18.5%) | 20 (30.8%) | 15 (23.1%) | 18 (27.7%) |
| | Admin | 4 (6.7%) | 19 (31.7%) | 23 (38.3%) | 14 (23.3%) |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Stress Sources | Acad | 2 (3.1%) | 5 (7.7%) | 11 (16.9%) | 47 (72.3%) |
| | Admin | 2 (3.3%) | 10 (16.7%) | 8 (13.3%) | 40 (66.7%) |
| Stress Symptoms | Acad | 4 (6.7%) | 14 (21.5%) | 6 (9.2%) | 41 (63.1%) |
| | Admin | 11 (18.3%) | 9 (15.0%) | 6 (10.0%) | 34 (56.7%) |
| **TOTALITY** | | **5.8 (9.3%)** | **12.8 (20.5%)** | **11.5 (18.4%)** | **32.3 (51.7%)** |

N = 65 (Acad) Legend:
60 (Admin)

MI - mild
MO - moderate
HI - high
SER - serious
Acad - academic staff
Admin - administrative staff

In totality, the data confirm that the stress profile of the SLSU employees is within the serious range with 51.7%. This clearly shows that the SLSU employees can be greatly affected by stress which means that they do not stand much chance against stress as stated by Miller and Smith (1993).

Moreover, table 6 presents the significant difference in the stress profile between the SLSU academic and administrative staff. As can be gleaned from the results, the difference between stress susceptibility and the perspective on stress symptoms between the academic and administrative staff obtained p-values greater than 0.05 at 0.05 level of significance, which fails to reject the null hypothesis which suggest accepting the null hypothesis. This implies that employees, whether teaching or not do not differ much in terms of their susceptibility to stress and their perspective about stress symptoms. This further means that regardless of the employees' nature of job in the workplace, their responses to stress which include the health implications of stress do not significantly differ.

Table 6. The stress profile difference between the slsu academic and administrative staff

| Variables | t-value | p-value | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|
| Stress Susceptibility | 0.295 | 0.771 | Fail to reject Ho |
| Stress Sources | 0.692 | 0.0121 | Reject Ho |
| Stress Symptoms | 0.077 | 0.941 | Fail to reject Ho |

*Legend:* *if p-value < 0.05, the test is significant*
*if p-value > 0.05, the test is not significant*

As for the employees' view on the stress sources, it came out that the difference between the academic and administrative staff obtained p-value lesser than 0.05 at 0.05 level of significance, which suggest accepting the null hypothesis. This articulates the big disparity in the nature of the job between teaching and the nonteaching personnel of the university. With the kind of mental work the teaching staff have, the way they respond and viewed stress sources is greatly different compared with that of the nonteaching staff whose work is more or less routinary in nature. This supports the contention of Miller and Smith (1993) when they emphasized that some people are like horses, and some are like butterflies in viewing and responding to stress sources. The complexities in their teaching job apparently have affected their notions about stress sources.

**The Correlation between the SLSU Employees' Stress and Demographic Profile**

Age does not matter when it comes to stress; thus, there is no age at which we are exempted from stress. According to Schultz and Schultz (n.d.), most of the people are well aware that as a person chronologically ages, there are more responsibilities and situational stressors that become part of his/her life which will subsequently result to consequences affecting his/her well-being. For adults, stress is a daily event, but children are not exempted from its impact and subsequent consequences. Likewise, symptoms of stress are especially apparent in teenagers (Bittman quoted in Schultz and Schultz, n.d.).

Schultz and Schultz (n.d.) define stress as the result of any demand on the mind or body. A critical point is reached when the demand surpasses the person's belief that it can be personally managed. The level of stress spawned by any given stressor will vary from person to person. The authors further emphasized that stress does not always have a negative consequence; low levels of stress can be motivational and very beneficial experiences contributing to the growth and development of the person. Acute and/or chronic stress can weaken every system within the body and lead a person to be more vulnerable to injury and disease.

Table 7 shows the impact of age to the stress profile of SLSU employees. The data confirmed that as to the employees' view on stress sources (job, family, financial, environmental, social, and personal stress sources) and stress symptoms (muscular, nervous system, emotional, cognitive, endocrine, and immune system stress symptoms), both the academic and the administrative staff obtained Chi-square values greater than 0.05 at 0.05 level of significance, hence, the tests are interpreted as not significant. However, as regard the stress susceptibility levels in relation to the age of the employees, the academic staff obtained Chi-square value lesser than 0.05 at 0.05 level of significance, which contradicted with the result in the administrative staff. Thus, the relationship between the academic staff's age and stress susceptibility is significant while that of the administrative staff is not. This means that age has no bearing with the SLSU employee's views about stress sources and symptoms. This is supported by Schultz and Schultz's (n.d) research result, which states that there would be no significant relationship between stress levels and chronological age. Although studies have shown that as individuals advance in age, the level of stress one experience during an evaluation is not impacted.

Nevertheless, age has something to do with stress susceptibility in case of the teaching staff while nil in case of the nonteaching staff. This implies that regardless of the sources and symptoms felt and experienced by the SLSU employees, age has an effect to the teaching staff's levels of susceptibility to stress. This is probably because of the nature of work teaching staff have, which entails more mental and reflective activities. Although opposed by Schultz and Schultz (n.d.), Miller and Smith (1993) opined that people are quite different from one

another in their susceptibility to stress wherein some are like horses, and some are like butterflies in terms of responding to stress.

Table 7. Correlation between SLSU employees' stress profile and age range

| Variables | SLSU Staff | Chi-square Value | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| Stress Susceptibility and Age | Academic Staff | 0.020 | Significant |
| | Administrative Staff | 0.362 | Not Significant |
| Stress Sources and Age | Academic Staff | 0.965 | Not Significant |
| | Administrative Staff | 0.134 | Not Significant |
| Stress Symptoms and Age | Academic Staff | 0.672 | Not Significant |
| | Administrative Staff | 0.500 | Not Significant |

*Legend:* *if Chi-square value < 0.05, the test is significant*
*if Chi-square value > 0.05, the test is not significant*

Another variable considered in this research study was the employees' length of work experience. Table 8 presents the relationship between the SLSU employees' stress profile and length of work experience.

As can be seen in Table 8, the results corroborate that the relationship between the academic and administrative staff's stress profile (such as stress susceptibility, stress sources and stress symptoms) and work experience obtained values of Pearson Correlation Coefficient (**r**) lesser than 0.03 at 0.05 level of significance hence results are interpreted as having a weak correlation. This implies that the length of service an employee has would have a slight impact to his/her susceptibility to stress and to the views on stress sources and stress symptoms. This further upholds that although the level of the employees' susceptibility to stress is serious, it does not necessarily imply that it is greatly affected by one's length of service, which only means that the length of service has a little impact to stress. Based on the researchers' observation in the workplace, most of the aging employees are those with longer length of service. As emphasized in previous researches disclosed by Schultz and Schultz (n.d.), age has no impact to stress susceptibility among

employees. Thus, it can be deduced that the relationship between stress and length of work experience is from nil to weak.

Table 8. Correlation between SLSU employees stress profile and work experience

| Variables | SLSU Staff | Pearson-r | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| Stress Susceptibility and Work Experience | Academic Staff | 0.080 | Weak Correlation |
| | Administrative Staff | 0.096 | Weak Correlation |
| Stress Sources and Work Experience | Academic Staff | 0.077 | Weak Correlation |
| | Administrative Staff | 0.159 | Weak Correlation |
| Stress Symptoms and Work Experience | Academic Staff | 0.158 | Weak Correlation |
| | Administrative Staff | 0.076 | Weak Correlation |

*Legend: if 0.00 < absolute value of r < 0.3 = the correlation is weak*

Moreover, the assignment of additional functions named as designation and its relationship with stress was also taken into consideration, hence table 9 shows the correlation between the SLSU employees' stress profile and designation.

As can be gleaned from the research findings, the relationship between stress susceptibility and designation of both the academic and administrative staff obtained chi-square values greater than 0.05 at 0.05 level of significance, thus the relationship of said variables is not significant. This illustrates that designation does not have a bearing with the stress susceptibility of both the teaching and the nonteaching staff, which further means that whether one has designation or otherwise, his or her tolerance to stress susceptibility is ostensibly high.

However, the relationship between stress sources and the academic and administrative staff's designation obtained chi-square values lesser than 0.05 at 0.05 level of significance, hence the test is significant. This would mean that the employees' overload has something to do with how they view stress sources and its effects to their health. According to Juanta (2003), people can become their own personal

stressor. Hard driving and competitiveness, a strong urge to excel in all endeavors, working to accomplish more and more in less and less time can take them to a breaking point. This further implies that those with designations having the aforesaid characteristics will likely view stress sources as threats to his or her personal and professional life.

Table 9. Correlation between SLSU employees' stress profile and designation

| Variables | SLSU Staff | Chi-square Value | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| Stress Susceptibility and Designation | Academic Staff | 0.865 | Not Significant |
| | Administrative Staff | 0.623 | Not Significant |
| Stress Sources and Designation | Academic Staff | 0.019 | Significant |
| | Administrative Staff | 0.002 | Significant |
| Stress Symptoms and Designation | Academic Staff | 0.001 | Significant |
| | Administrative Staff | 0.974 | Not Significant |

*Legend:* *if p-value < 0.05, the test is significant*
*if p-value > 0.05, the test is not significant*

As for the relationship between the employees' designation and their views on stress symptoms, the academic staff posed a different test result compared with administrative staff in which the academic staff obtained chi-square values less than 0.05 at 0.05 level of significance while greater than 0.05 for the administrative staff. This means that for the academic staff, the test is significant, while otherwise for administrative staff. This implies further that since the academic staff is presumed to be mentally overloaded, they become more apprehensive regarding stress symptoms and apparently affect them.

## CONCLUSION

The employees of the Southern Leyte State University (SLSU) manifested a serious susceptibility to source and symptoms of stress which is significantly affected by the age profile of the academic staff, and slightly affected by the length of service of both academic

and administrative staff. The academic personnel's number of office designations had affected both their perspective on stress sources and symptoms.

It can be figured out that the SLSU administrative and academic personnel's notions concerning stress sources and symptoms vary due to the nature and gravity of the tasks they perform.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the findings and conclusions of this research study, the following are proposed:

1. A comprehensive "Welfare Administration Program" for the SLSU employees must be proposed for implementation in order to reduce the health risks caused by stress thereby improving the employee's work motivation;

2. The PRAISE Committee of the University must be activated and be functional for the granting of awards and/or incentives to deserving employees to lessen stress among the employees and improve work motivation among them thereby increasing work performance;

3. A training and sports-related activities (those that avoid age discrimination) must be initiated by concerned offices of the university to promote welfare and well-being of all SLSU employees; and

4. To help the SLSU administration formulate an improved stress and health management mechanism for its employees, the following research studies must be pursued:

   a. "The Management Styles and Teacher Stress of SLSU: A Correlational Study";
   b. "Work Motivational Factors and Performance of the SLSU Administrative Staff";
   c. "The Work Performance Indicators of the Academic and

Administrative Staff of SLSU."; and

d. "Stress Coping Mechanisms of SLSU Administrative and Academic Staff"

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